

In re: Offutt et al.
Appl. No. 09/275,887
Filed: March 25, 1999
Page 17

CONCLUSION

As described above, this amendment does not raise any new issues and does not introduce any new matter, and should therefore be considered and entered by the Examiner. In this regard, in view of the amendments to the claims and the remarks presented above, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested in due course. The Examiner is encouraged to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney to resolve any remaining issues in order to expedite examination of the present application.

It is not believed that extensions of time or fees for net addition of claims are required, beyond those, which may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to allow consideration of this paper, such extensions are hereby petitioned under 37 CFR § 1.136(a), and any fee required therefore (including fees for net addition of claims) is hereby authorized to be charged to Deposit Account No. 16-0605.

Respectfully submitted,



Andrew T. Spence
Registration No. 45,699

CUSTOMER NO. 00826
ALSTON & BIRD LLP
Bank of America Plaza
101 South Tryon Street, Suite 4000
Charlotte, NC 28280-4000
Tel Charlotte Office (704) 444-1000
Fax Charlotte Office (704) 444-1111

CERTIFICATION OF FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that this paper is being facsimile transmitted to the Patent and Trademark Office at Fax No. (703) 872-9327 on the date shown below.

Andrew T. Spence

(Type or print name of person signing certification.)

Signature

Date

In re: Offutt et al.
Appl. No. 09/275,887
Filed: March 25, 1999
Page 18

Version with Markings to Show Changes Made:

In the Claims:

Claims 1, 10, 12, 21, 23, 32, 36, 44, 49 and 50 have been amended as follows:

1. (Thrice Amended) A method for providing information regarding savings associated with travel alternatives comprising the steps, performed by a processor, of:
 - receiving a request from a user reflecting a travel itinerary, wherein the request includes information identifying an originating location and a destination;
 - analyzing the travel itinerary to determine a set of alternative itineraries comparable to the travel itinerary specified in the request based on selected rules associated with travel, wherein the analyzing step includes identifying any intermediate locations in a route between the originating location and the destination, and wherein the analyzing step includes identifying at least one alternative itinerary including an alternate originating location or destination that is different than the originating location or destination included in the request;
 - determining a value for the travel itinerary specified in the request;
 - determining a value for each of the alternative itineraries; and
 - generating a report, based on the analysis and determination, including a value for each alternative itinerary reflecting a savings in travel costs in comparison with the travel itinerary reflected by the request.

10. (Twice Amended) A method for providing information regarding savings associated with travel alternatives comprising the steps, performed by a processor, of:
 - receiving a request from a user reflecting a travel itinerary;
 - analyzing the travel itinerary to determine a set of alternative itineraries comparable to the travel itinerary specified in the request based upon selected rules associated with travel;
 - determining a value for the travel itinerary specified in the request;
 - determining a value for each of the alternative itineraries; and
 - generating a report reflecting the analysis and determinations,

In re: Offutt et al.
Appl. No. 09/275,887
Filed: March 25, 1999
Page 19

wherein the request includes the name of an originating location and a destination, wherein the analyzing step includes identifying at least one alternative itinerary including an alternate originating location or destination that is different than the originating location or destination included in the request, and wherein the analyzing step includes locating any predetermined travel packages that include travel between the originating location and a the destination, and wherein the travel packages are pre-configured packages based upon prior negotiations with providers of travel services.

12. (Thrice Amended) A computer-readable medium containing instructions for causing a computer to perform a method for providing information regarding savings associated with travel alternatives the method comprising the steps of:

receiving a request from a user reflecting a travel itinerary, wherein the request includes information identifying an originating location and a destination;

analyzing the travel itinerary to determine a set of alternative itineraries comparable to the travel itinerary specified in the request based on selected rules associated with travel, wherein the analyzing step includes identifying any intermediate locations in a route between the originating location and the destination, and wherein the analyzing step includes identifying at least one alternative itinerary including an alternate originating location or destination that is different than the originating location or destination included in the request;

determining a value for the travel itinerary specified in the request; determining a value for each of the alternative itineraries; and generating a report, based on the analysis and determination, including a value for each alternative itinerary reflecting a savings in travel costs in comparison with the travel itinerary reflected by the request.

21. (Twice Amended) A computer-readable medium containing instructions for causing a computer to perform a method for providing information regarding savings associated with travel alternatives, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving a request from the user reflecting a travel itinerary, wherein the request includes information identifying an originating location and a destination;

In re: Offutt et al.
Appl. No. 09/275,887
Filed: March 25, 1999
Page 20

analyzing the travel itinerary to determine a set of alternative itineraries comparable to the travel itinerary specified in the request based on selected rules associated with travel, wherein the analyzing step includes identifying intermediate locations in a route between the originating location and the destination, and wherein the analyzing step includes identifying at least one alternative itinerary including an alternate originating location or destination that is different than the originating location or destination included in the request; and

determining a value for the travel itinerary specified in the request; determining a value for each of the alternative itineraries; and generating a report reflecting the analysis and determinations.

23. (Thrice Amended) A computer system for providing information regarding savings associated with travel alternatives comprising:

a buyer interface for producing a request from a user reflecting a travel itinerary, wherein the request includes information identifying an originating location and a destination; and

a server for analyzing the travel itinerary to determine a set of alternative itineraries comparable to the travel itinerary specified in the request based on selected rules associated with travel, for determining a value for the travel itinerary specified in the request, for determining a value for each of the alternative itineraries, and for generating a report, based on the analysis and determination, including a value for each alternative itinerary reflecting a savings in travel costs in comparison with the travel itinerary reflected by the request,

wherein analyzing the travel itinerary includes identifying any intermediate locations in a route between the originating location and the destination, and wherein analyzing the travel itinerary includes identifying at least one alternative itinerary including an alternate originating location or destination that is different than the originating location or destination included in the request.

32. (Twice Amended) A computer system for providing information regarding savings associated with travel alternatives comprising:

a buyer interface for producing a request from a user reflecting a travel itinerary; and

In re: Offutt et al.
Appl. No. 09/275,887
Filed: March 25, 1999
Page 21

a server for analyzing the travel itinerary to determine a set of alternative itineraries comparable to the travel itinerary specified in the request based on selected rules associated with travel, for determining a value for the travel itinerary specified in the request, for determining a value for each of the alternative itineraries, and for generating a report reflecting the analysis and determinations,

wherein the request includes the name of an originating location and a destination, wherein the analyzing step includes identifying at least one alternative itinerary including an alternate originating location or destination that is different than the originating location or destination included in the request, and wherein analyzing the travel itinerary includes locating any predetermined travel packages that include travel between the originating location and a destination, and wherein the travel packages are pre-configured packages based on prior negotiations with providers of travel resources.

36. (Thrice Amended) A computer system for providing information regarding savings associated with travel alternatives comprising:

an interface means for producing a request from a user reflecting a travel itinerary, wherein the request includes information identifying an originating location and a destination; and

a serving means for analyzing the travel itinerary to determine a set of alternative itineraries comparable to the travel itinerary specified in the request based on selected rules associated with travel, for determining a value for the travel itinerary specified in the request, for determining a value for each of the alternative itineraries, and for generating a report, based on the analysis and determination, including a value for each alternative itinerary reflecting a savings in travel costs in comparison with the travel itinerary reflected by the request,

wherein analyzing the travel itinerary includes identifying any intermediate locations in a route between the originating location and the destination, and wherein analyzing the travel itinerary includes identifying at least one alternative itinerary including an alternate originating location or destination that is different than the originating location or destination included in the request.

In re: Offutt et al.
Appl. No. 09/275,887
Filed: March 25, 1999
Page 22

44. (Amended) A method for providing travel alternatives, comprising:
receiving, from a user, a request including a travel itinerary including an origination location, a destination location, and a first value associated with the itinerary;
determining, without user intervention, a set of alternative itineraries, at least one each alternate itinerary being associated with an alternative value and a route between an alternative alternate originating location or alternate destination location, and either the origination or destination location included in the request; and
providing a report including a indication of the first value, the alternate value for each alternate itinerary, and a savings value for each alternate itinerary reflecting a difference between the first value and the respective alternate value.

49. (Amended) A method for providing travel alternatives, comprising:
receiving, from a user, a request including a travel itinerary including an origination location, a destination location, and a first value associated with the itinerary;
determining, without user intervention, a set of alternative itineraries, at least one alternative itinerary including ~~that each include~~ a route between an ~~alternative alternate~~ origination location or alternate destination location, and either the origination or destination location included in the request;
determining an alternate value for each alternate itinerary, and
providing a report including a geographical map that contains:
a graphical representation of the origination location, destination location, and each alternate location,
a graphical representation of a first path between the origination and destination locations and a corresponding cost of travel for the first path, and
a graphical representation of an alternate path between each alternate location and either the origination or destination locations and a corresponding cost of travel for each respective alternate path.

In re: Offutt et al.
Appl. No. 09/275,887
Filed: March 25, 1999
Page 23

50. (Amended) A method for providing travel alternatives, comprising:
receiving, from a user, a request including a travel itinerary including a travel route between an origination location and a destination location;
determining, without user intervention, a set of alternative itineraries, at least one alternative itinerary that each include including an alternate route between an alternate location origination location or alternate destination location, and either the origination or destination location included in the request; and
providing a report to the user such that the user may visually inspect a map including a graphical representation of the route between the origination and destination locations and the alternate routes, and a travel cost for each corresponding route.